



Strongbow's Conquest of Ireland

Francis Pierrepont Barnard

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In 1169, Richard de Clare (nicknamed Strongbow) took a force of soldiers across the sea with the intention of restoring Dermot Mac Murrough, prince of Leinster, to his throne.

This began the Norman invasion of Ireland.

Soon, Henry II was juggling the egos that went along with governing the newly conquered country, even sending his own son across the Irish Sea to better manage its affairs.

Twelfth-century Ireland was a land of feuding states, intense piety and home to acts of astounding heroism and breath-taking treachery.

Francis Barnard has collected here a series of the most important documents relating to the conquest and early government of Ireland. Drawing heavily from the writings of Giraldus Cambrensis, a Welsh priest who travelled to Ireland as advisor to Prince John, he tells the story of the conquest of that country to the challenges of governing a people who would not submit meekly to subjugation.

Embracing the period from 1166 to 1186 and including the writings of both English and Irish eyewitnesses, this book provides a full account of the period.

Works by William of Newbury, the "Four Masters", Gervase of Canterbury, Gervase of Tilbury, Richard Fitz-Neal, Magheoghegan and others join Giraldus Cambrensis' detailed narrative.

Through careful organisation, Barnard has created a clear chronological narrative that is easy to follow even to those with no prior knowledge of the subject.

The focus is on the political and military actions of the Normans, but space is made for examining the development of religion, the local customs of the Irish and a detailed series of portraits of all the main actors.

This volume provides an excellent starting point for anyone interested in learning more about the origins of the troubled relationship between Britain and the Emerald Isle.

Francis Pierrepont Barnard (1854-1931) was an English school-teacher who wrote a number of books including the *Companion to English History: The Middle Ages* in 1902 and *The Casting-Counter and the Counting Board* in 1906.

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